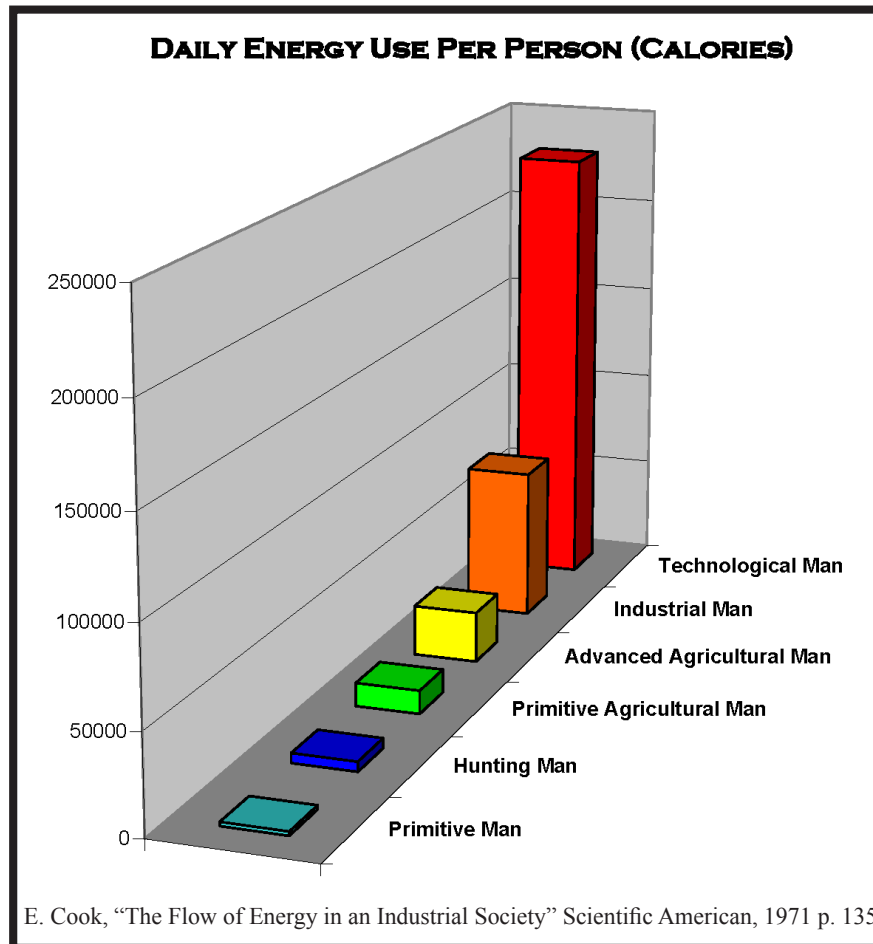


Energy Consumption

Energy is extremely valuable to us in ways that go far beyond money. Energy keeps us warm, grows our food and then cooks it, builds our buildings, lights up the night and transports us around the entire planet. Energy literally keeps us alive in what would be a very harsh natural world without access to plentiful energy sources. Those of us in developed countries now use enormous sums of energy and pay very little for it; in terms of money at least. In Lesson 1 we learned about some of the **environmental costs** - including climate change - associated with using fossil fuels.



Human Energy Consumption

Your brain consumes about 20 watts of power continuously. If it were an incandescent light bulb, it would be pretty dim. Your whole body uses a total of about 100 watts of power continuously. All told, you physically need about 2.4 kilowatt-hours (2000 Calories) of energy from food to make it through each day.

However, in this age of modern technology, people use many times this amount for everything from air conditioning to transportation. With the help of fossil fuels, the average person worldwide now consumes 2,000 watts of power *continuously*, or 20 times as much energy as their body physically needs. And the average American uses six times *more than that* - 120 times their physical needs.



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